

For my midterm media project, I chose to make an Instagram account about the history and significance of the Japanese gaming industry. In particular, how Japan consolidated soft power and influence over the West through video games and their platforms. I chose this topic as it is one I have a personal connection to. Video games were a big part of my childhood and some of my favorite games as a kid happened to be Japanese. A few of my fondest memories with my elementary school friends were the times we gathered after school to play Mario Kart or Super Smash Bros. I have also personally owned several Japanese made gaming consoles, including the Wii and several renditions of the Playstation. Given it's a subject I have personal experience with and prior knowledge about, it was an easy choice to make it the focus of my project. To express this topic, I chose to create an Instagram for it. Instagram is a social media app I have become very familiar with over the years. Like most of my demographic, I know the ins and outs of Instagram very well and spend way more time on the app than I probably should. Given this, I knew I could utilize the site as an effective means of conveying my message compared to other forms of digital media. Instagram allows users to post images along with captions of an indefinite length. This provided me with a medium to provide both a written description and a visual aide. The caption provides initial information and context which is then built upon by the images attached. Instagram also allows the user to feature several pictures within one post. This allows for further visual context for the viewer to consume. Another component of Instagram that facilitated my project's message is the organization of the app's interface into a feed. The feed provides for a seamless chronological consumption of content for the user. The admin of a page is able to channel their posts in the exact intended order to their audience. This feature helped me specifically arrange my posts in a chronological order that represented the historical progression of my subject matter. In terms of what the message of this project actually was, I aimed to highlight why video games are significant to the spread of Japanese imagery and culture. My media sought to illustrate this by providing historical images taken at the time of each event. These pictures provide for better perception of the occurrences themselves and lead to a more informed reflection upon them from the audience. While browsing the internet for pictures to post relating to each subtopic of my project, I unintentionally learned a lot. The pages of photos gave me more insight into Japanese gaming and its evolution, allowing me to understand it more fully. Just like any other medium, however, Instagram does have its fair share of shortcomings. Some of the images were not able to be cropped in the manner I intended. I also wish Instagram allowed for more creativity in incorporating captions onto posts.

<https://www.instagram.com/jpvideogamehistory/>